

Training nurses in categorisation for evacuation in a large University Hospital

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Background: In hospital disaster preparedness, knowledge and skills in evacuation and more specific in categorisation of patients is an essential competence that nurses are not trained in during a normal education curriculum. The purpose of this study is to set up and evaluate such a categorisation exercise on the patient population present at the time of the exercise.

Methods: After an introduction of the existing categorisation system and a categorisation made in advance, the group of nurses were divided in two groups. In a table top setting, the patients were categorised and placed in order for evacuation by both groups. An evaluation of the exercise and a description of the different categories was made. Finally, a comparison between groups was calculated.

Results: More than 60 wards, functional units, Operating theatres, the Emergency department and Intensive care units participated in the study. The exercise was highly appreciated by the participating nurses. In addition, the comparison resulted in a high correlation ($r^2 > 0.85$) between the two groups and with the control categorisation. As the study is on-going, the final results will be presented at the meeting.

Conclusions: A short during and practical exercise on categorisation for evacuation was highly appreciated by the majority of all participating nurses and units. Although categorisation for evacuation is not a routine skill of nurses, surprisingly high correlation factors were observed. This indicates that the categorisation system is easy to apply and has practical implications.